

Message Text

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17

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EB-07 /018 W
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R 280850Z OCT 75
FM AMEMBASSY JIDDA
TO USDOC WASHDC
SECSTATE WASHDC 2739

UNCLAS JIDDA 7206
TAGS: BEXP, SA
SUBJECT: BUIDEX '36 SAUDI ARABIA

REF: USDOC 15943

SUMMARY: WE APPRECIATE INFO RE SAUDI COMATT TRAVEL AND
WILL ATTEMPT DISCUSS SUBJECT FULLY. IN MEANTIME, WE WOULD
LIKE COMMERCE CONSIDER WORK DONE BY WILLIAM VITOUS HERE
AND FIRM CONSENSUS HERE AT THAT TIME THAT JIDDA NOT BEST
SITE FOR EXHIBIT. FRANKLY, WE ARE AMAZED THAT HAJ
BUILDINGS STILL BEING CONSIDERED, AND SUBMIT PROBLEMS
FACING ANY JIDDA SHOW IN APRIL. END SUMMARY.

1. DURING VITOUS VISIT WE COVERED FOLLOWING POINTS, ANY ONE
OF WHICH APPEARS TO ELIMINATE HAJ BUILDINGS AND JIDDA AS SITE.

A. SAUDI PRIVATELY ORGANIZED FAIR WILL BE HELD
MARCH 15-29, 1976. THIS PREVENTS ACCESS TO HAJ BUILDINGS
IN TIME TO MOUNT U.S. EXHIBIT THERE APRIL 12-17. LOCAL
PROMOTER CLAIMS HE HAS USE OF BUILDINGS TO DISMANTLE, ETC.
TO MAY. (IN VIEW OF ABOVE, REMAINING POINTS MAY BE
ACADEMIC, BUT SHOULD BE CONSIDERED BY COMMERCE FROM OVERALL
ASPECT).

B. CURRENT GLUT IN HARBOR AND PORT -- 70-80 DAY
DELAY OFFLOADING AND 100 PERCENT SURCHARGE BEING EFFECTED
WILL MAKE JIDDA NOT ONLY RISKY BUT EXCESSIVELY COSTLY.
UNLESS SHIPMENTS UNDERWAY NOW DELIVERY FOR APRIL ALMOST
IMPOSSIBLE.

C. FOR OVERLAND SHIPMENTS JIDDA IS 690 MILES FARTHER
FROM EUROPEAN AND OTHER EASTERN ARABIAN PORTS THAN RIYADH.
OVERLAND RUN FROM ROTTERDAM AND BREMEN TO RIYADH AVERAGING
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14 TO 18 DAYS.

D. HAJ BUILDINGS AT AIRPORT ARE IN MILITARILY RESTRICTED AREA WHERE PHOTOGRAPHY FORBIDDEN AND INGRESS TIGHTLY CONTROLLED. PLEASE CHECK VITOUS.

E. JIDDA HAS WORST HOTEL SHORTAGE IN SAG.

F. SAG HAS GRANTED PERMISSION FOR FAIR IN JIDDA, BUT RELUCTANTLY. PREFERENCE SHOWN FOR RIYADH.

G. EXHIBIT THEME EXCELLENTLY SUITED TO SAG FIVE YEAR PLAN AND ALL MINISTRIES EXCEPT FOREIGN AFFAIRS ARE IN RIYADH. OTHER THAN SMALL CHINESE EXHIBIT IN 1974, WE WILL BE FIRST TO HAVE MAJOR EXHIBIT IN CAPITAL. THEME MOST RESPONSIVE TO OFFICIAL INTERESTS.

H. RIYADH CLOSER TO OTHER TARGETS SUCH AS BAHRAIN, KUWAIT, ETC.

I. CLIMATE IS MUCH BETTER FOR PERSONNEL AND FOR VISITORS, AND U.S. CORPS OF ENGINEERS STILL AGREEABLE TO LOAN OF SITE IF THEY CAN PURCHASE BUILDINGS AT GOOD PRICE.

2. WILL REPORT ON DISCUSSIONS WITH MINCOM AND COMATT SOONEST. IN MEANTIME, HAS CAGNE EVALUATED VITOUS REPORT??

3. IF COMMERCE INTENT ON JIDDA, EMBASSY WILLING TO ALLOW USE OF SPACE ON COMPOUND FACING OCEAN SIDE. ACROSS STREET IS OPEN LEVEL LAND WHICH MIGHT SUFFICE FOR OPEN AREA DISPLAY. AKINS

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